

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LOME 02300 01 OF 02 152204Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

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R 140900Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4480

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LOME 2300

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR EFIN TO

SUBJ: AFRICA AND THE UNITED STATES: MUTIS MUTANDIS

REF: LOME 2289

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: PROFOUND CHANGES HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN AFRICAN LEADERSHIP, IN AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS AND THE AFRICAN PERCEPTION OF THE US. THESE CHANGES ARE FAVORABLE TO AMERICAN POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. PREPARATORY NOTE: MUTIS MUTANDIS MEANS "...NECESSARY CHANGES HAVING BEEN MADE."

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PAGE 02 LOME 02300 01 OF 02 152204Z

3. EYADEMA: I SHALL DEPART TOGO ON JULY 15 AFTER OBSERVING TOGOLESE PRESIDENT GNASSINGBE EYADEMA CLOSELY FOR TWENTY MONTHS. IN THIS PERIOD HE HAS BEEN VARIOUSLY PRESIDENT PRO TEMP-ORORE OF THE ECOWAS HEADS OF STATE AUTHORITY, PRESIDENT PRO TEM OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ENTENTE, PRESIDENT PRO TEM OF THE DCEAO (CFA CENTRAL BANK), VICE PRESIDENT OF THE OAU, AND WAS

CHOSEN BY CONSENSUS BY HIS FRANCOPHONE COLLEAGUES AT THE 1978 PARIS FRANCOPHONE SUMMIT TO BE SPOKESMAN FOR THE MODERATE POSITION AGAINST SOVIET-CUBAN INCURSION IN AFRICA. IN THE PAST TWENTY MONTHS EYADEMA HAS WELCOMED TO TOGO A CONTINUOUS STREAM OF HEADS OF STATE OF THE WEST AFRICAN AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION. QADHAFI AND HE HAVE EXCHANGED VISITS AND EYADEMA HAS VISITED EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. NOW IN HIS ELEVENTH YEAR OF RULE SINCE TAKING OVER EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE TOGOLESE ARMY IN 1967, EYADEMA HAS TRANSFORMED HIMSELF FROM AN ILL-EDUCATED SERGEANT MAJOR WHO COULD BARELY SPEAK FRENCH INTO A STATESMAN. HE IS COMFORTABLE WITH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AND WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT AND THEY ARE AT EASE WITH HIM.

4. EYADEMA'S STRONG PERSONALITY AND EQUALLY STRONG INTELLIGENCE, ALBEIT HAMPERED BY THE LIMITATIONS OF AUTO-DIDACTICISM, HAVE ENABLED HIM TO PROJECT HIMSELF AND TOGO INTO WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN INCREASINGLY STRATEGIC POSITION IN THE AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM. JUST AS HEADS OF STATE HAVE MADE THEIR WAY TO LOME SO HAS IT BEEN ALSO WITH LEADERS OF GUERRILLA GROUPS SUCH AS JONAS SAVIMBI, ROBERT MUGABE, POLISARIO, AND SUCH FIGURES AS REVEREND SITHOLE. THE CHANGES THAT EYADEMA HAS BEEN ABLE TO MAKE IN HIMSELF AND IN TOGO WERE MOST VIVIDLY AND POIGNANTLY IN FOCUS, IN MY VIEW, DURING GUINEAN PRESIDENT SEKOU TOURE'S RECENT VISIT TO LOME. THE SYMBOLISM OF EYADEMA AND TOURE SITTING SIDE BY SIDE WAS VERY AFFECTING. TOURE WAS ALREADY A MAJOR

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LOME 02300 01 OF 02 152204Z

FIGURE IN FRENCH POLITICS AND IN AFRICAN POLITICS IN 1959 WHEN THE THEN 23-YEAR-OLD EYADEMA WAS ABOUT TO BE DEMOBILIZED FROM THE FRENCH ARMY HAVING MOST RECENTLY SERVED AS AN ORDERLY IN THE FRENCH HEADQUARTERS IN DAHOMEY. AN YET, AS TOURE'S TRIMPHAL VISIT TO TOGO PROGRESSED, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THE TRANSFORMATION WHICH EYADEMA HAD MADE IN HIMSELF BETWEEN 1959 AND 1978 HAD BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER THAN THAT WHICH TOURE HAD MADE. TOURE SEEMED MOORED IN THE PAST, REPEATING THE EMPTY SLOGANS AND BOMBAST OF THE 1960'S. IN CONTRAST, EYADEMA SEEMED MORE MODERN,, PRAGMATIC AND THOUGH CAREFUL TO AVOID PATRONIZING THE OLDER MAN, CLEARLY THE SUPERIOR.

5. EYADEMA'S PERSONAL HERO IS GENERAL LE CLERC, BUT, INEVITABLY, HIS CHARACTER MODELS ACE NAPOLEAN AND DE GAULLE. HIS MODEL FOR POLITICS, AND CLEARLY AN ESTEEMED FATHER FIGURE, IS IVORY COAST'S FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY. HOWEVER I HAVE THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING IS HAVING A MARKED INTELLECTUAL IMPACT ON EYADEMA AND PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE TOGOLESE PRESIDENT'S ENLARGING CONCEPT OF THE HISTORICAL ROLE WHICH THE OCCIDENT HAS PLAYED AND THE ROLE WHICH THE US CAN PLAY AS A PART OF THE OCCIDENT IN A SUCCESSFUL INTERACTION WITH AFRICA. I ALSO HAVE THE STRONG IMPRESSION FROM

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FRENCH THAT THEY HOPE EYADEMA WILL PICK UP
THE ROLE OF AFRICAN SPOKESMAN FOR FRENCH POLICY THAT HAS BEEN
PLAYED UP TO NOW BY ELDER STATESMEN HOUPHOUET AND SENGHOR.

6. WITH ALL OF THE DYNAMICS OF PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER CHANGE
WHICH THE TOGOLESE PRESIDENT HAS SUBJECTED HIMSELF TO AND HAS BEEN
SUBJECTED TO BY EXTERNAL FORCES, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO
REALIZE THAT HE REMAINS PROFOUNDLY AFRICAN AND A MAN OF HIS TRIBE
AND VILLAGE. HIS FUNDEMENTAL APPROACH TO STATECRAFT AND TO
TOGOLESE AND AFRICAN INTERACTIONS WITH EXTRA-CONTINENTAL FORCES
IS THAT HE, LIKE OTHER INHABITANTS OF THIS VAST CONTINENT, IS AN
AFRICAN AND A MEMBER OF A CIVILIZATION WHICH HAS EMERGED UNDR
VERY SPECIAL HISTORICAL FORCES AND HE STRONGLY GUARDS THIS SENSE
OF AFRICAN IDENTITY. HE DOES NOT RESIST CHANGE, NOR DOES HE BELIEVE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LOME 02300 01 OF 02 152204Z

THAT AFRICA SHOULD RESIST CHANGE, INDEED HE WELCOMES CHANGE BUT
THE CHANGE MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE. ON
THIS BASIS, HE REJECTS COMMUNISM BECAUSE ITS FUNDEMENTAL IDEAS,
HE BELIEVES, ARE INIMICAL TO MAINTENANCE OF AFRICAN TRADITION.
ON THIS BASIS ALSO, HE BELIEVES THAT WESTERN CONCEPTS OF PARTIA-
MENTARY DEMOCRACY AND THE ATTENDENT FREEDOMS OF CHOICE, ASSEMBLY
AND OTHERS, ARE NOT WELL ADAPTED TO A SYSTEM WHERE THE TRADITIONAL
IS ONE OF AUTHORITARIAN ALBEIT BENEVOLENT RULE, AND THERE
EXISTS A COMPLEXITY OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN WHICH TRUST, THE CRUCIAL
ELEMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE OF DEMOCRACY, IS LACKING.

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PAGE 01 LOME 02300 02 OF 02 150518Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LOME 2300

7. AFRICA: CHANGE IS OCCURRING IN AFRICA SO RAPIDLY THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW SOMETIMES. HITHERTO ISOLATED VILLAGES ARE BEING CONNECTED TO THE CASH ECONOMY BY ROADS. IN THE CASE OF TOGO, THE LAST PHASE OF THE ALL-WEATHER ROAD IN THE FAR NORTH GOING TO UPPER VOLTAN BORDER IS ALMOST COMPLETED. HEAVY TRUCKS ALREADY ROUTINELY MAKE THE TRIP FROM LOME TO OUAGADOUGOU, NIAMEY AND BAMAKO. THE POST OF LOME IS NOT BEING WELL MANAGED SINCE THE GERMAN CADRE HAS BEEN REPLACED BY TOGOLESE. NEVERTHELESS, THE POST IS CROWDED WITH VESSELS BRINGING GOODS FOR TRANSSHIPMENT THROUGH THIS INCIPIENT ENTREPOT STATE. AS WITH MOST OF AFRICA, HALF OF TOGO'S POPULATION IS UNDER FIFTEEN AND THE GOVERNMENT IS MAKING DESPERATE EFFORTS AT SCHOOL CONSTRUC-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LOME 02300 02 OF 02 150518Z

TION AND THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN ORDER TO COPE EVEN marginally WITH THE RISING DEMAND FOR EDUCATION. TECHNOLOGY RANGING ALL THE WAY FROM A REFINERY TO THE USE OF OXEN FOR PLOWING IS ENTERING THIS ECONOMY AND CAUSING TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE MOST BASIC TYPE. PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST TOUCHING AND YET OMINOUS DEVELOPMENTS IS THAT VIRTUALLY ALL WOMEN IN TOGO NOW CAN HAVE ACCESS TO SOME DEGREE OF MODERN PRENATAL CARE AND MODERN MIDWIFERY. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT WHEN MALTHUSIAN CHECKS ON POPULATION ARE LIFTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE GEOMETRIC PROGRESSION OF POPULATION GROWTH WILL PROCEED TO EXACERBATE ALL OTHER PROBLEMS.

8. AS WITH EYADEMA, HOWEVER, CHANGING AFRICA REMAINLY DEEPLY CONSERVATIVE AND TRADITIONAL. THE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE AFRICAN URBAN AND RURAL SETTINGS REMAIN CLOSE AND IMPORTANT. WHILE THERE IS SUPERFICIAL RHETORIC ABOUT SOCIALISM IN TOGO AND ELSEWHERE, THE MARKET ECONOMY IS GROWING RAPIDLY, THE PROFIT MOTIVE IS WELL UNDERSTOOD AND THE NEED FOR INVESTMENT CLEARLY APPRECIATED.

9. IN THE CASE OF TOGO AND OTHER FRANCOPHONE STATES, IT APPEARS THAT THE NEED FOR INVESTMENT FLOWS GOES BEYOND THE FRENCH ABILITY TO PROVIDE. THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR US PRIVATE CAPITAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE TYPES OF ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

TOGO AND OTHER STATES WISH. AS THE IVORY COAST DID EARLIER, TOGO IS SLOWLY CREATING THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR US PARTICIPATION IN ITS ECONOMY, BUT AMERICAN TRADE AND INVESTMENT CONTINUES TO STUMBLE ALONG AT LEVELS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF 1960. IF TOGO AND AFRICA ARE TO CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION THAT US POLICY WOULD WISH, NECESSARY CHANGES WILL HAVE TO BE MADE IN US COMMERCIAL POLICY, AND IN THE INVESTMENT CLIMATES OF THE RECEIVING COUNTRIES: IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIAL FLOWS OF RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LOME 02300 02 OF 02 150518Z

10. THE TIME IS RIPE, HOWEVER, FOR SUCH CHANGE. TOGO IS READY. AFRICA IS READY.

11. THE US: NECESSARY CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE IN US POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA AND TOWARD TOGO. IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, QUALITATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS IN AFRICAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE US AND US POLICY HAVE TAKEN PLACE. WHATEVER OTHER OUTCOMES OF THE INDOCHINA WAR, WATERGATE AND THE ENERGY CRISIS MAY HAVE HAD, THE US IS SEEN AS LESS IMPERIAL. WHAT SOME TOGOLESE HAVE DESCRIBED TO ME AS A US PROPENSITY IN THE PAST TO PERCEIVE ITSELF AS BOTH OMNIPOTENT AND OMNISCIENT HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY DIMINISHED. WE ARE PERCEIVED AS FAR MORE HUMAN AND SINCERE. PARADOXICALLY, WHILE THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF OUR TALL-IN-THE-SADDLE IMAGE HAVE DIMINISHED, AFRICANS BELIEVE WE STILL RETAIN THE ABILITY TO DO ANYTHING WE WANT--IF WE WANT TO DO IT. THIS MEANS THAT WE COULD EASILY TELL THE CUBANS TO GO HOME, IF WE WISHED. WE COULD TELL THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO STRAIGHTEN UP, AND THEY WOULD, IF WE WISHED. WE COULD SOLVE THE RHODESIA PROBLEM, AND PUT IAN SMITH IN HIS PLACE, IF WE WISHED. WE COULD BRING PROSPERITY TO AFRICA AND CAUSE THE DESERT TO BLOOM, IF WE WISHED. CERTAINLY, WE COULD TELL THE RUSSIANS TO STAY OUT OF AFRICA AND MIND THEIR OWN BUSINESS, IF WE WISHED.

12. SURELY THIS IS WISHFUL THINKING AND IT PRESENTS REAL DANGERS TO THE US AS WE SEEK TO DO SOME OF THESE THINGS WITH OUR INEVITABLY LIMITED RESOURCES. BUT THE OPPORTUNITY IS THERE. THE AFRICANS THINK THAT WE CAN DO THESE THINGS AND THE CHANGE IN THE ATMOSPHERE IS SUCH THAT WE HAVE THE WILL TO CONCEPTUALIZE SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS AND WE ARE SUCCESSFULLY CONVEYING THE FEELING THAT, INDEED, WE WOULD LIKE TO HELP SOLVE THE FOREGOING PROBLEMS, IF WE CAN. OUR PROBLEM WILL BE AS WE CONTINUE TO MAKE NECESSARY CHANGES TO KEEP OUR LEVEL OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AHEAD OF THE AFRICAN LEVEL OF EXPECTATION. MUTIS MUTANDIS, THIS APPEARS POSSIBLE. PALMER

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